Netherhall School computers, 1981 *154.41*

c.27.5: Computers

1950

1954 11 09
British military officers and civilian personnel from the Lakenheath air base witnessed a 'Skysweeper' firing demonstration at Weybourne range, Norfolk. This is the U.S. army's largest calibre automatic anti-aircraft artillery weapon – an artillery machine gun. It is the first weapon with radar, computer and gun on one carriage with fully integrated gun and fire control. The units are designed to spot and track with radar and aim and fire the gun semi-automatically at enemy aircraft flying near-sonic speeds at low and medium altitudes.

1957 04 26
The Appointments Board in Chaucer Road is the undergraduates' "labour exchange". The Secretary, J.G. Davies interviews 1,500 students every year, some after they have done National Service or after a year's not-to-successful search on their own. A small intake, a dozen each year, go into atomic research where the standards are very high. There is a demand for mathematicians because of the development of automatic computers and economic analysis in Government offices but a desperate shortage of teachers specialising in science. 57 04 26

1957 05 04
A Pye Magnetic Tape Data Store will be shown at an Exhibition at Olympia. It is the first to incorporate electro-pneumatic tape control allowing very high-speed movement. They were commissioned to produce six special units for experimental work in computer design and development. One has been delivered to the University Mathematical Laboratory for use with their new powerful computer EDSAC II. 57 05 04

1957 10 18
Water-powered computer – 57 10 18a

1959 10 08
The Chartered Institute of Secretaries paid a fascinating visit to the University Mathematical Laboratory. Mr E.N. Mutch, the Superintendent, outlined the development of electronic computers since 1944, after which members were given a practical demonstration of the latest machine in action. They saw the computer being used by Sir Edward Bullard who explained how scientific data had been recorded on the tape which was then fed into the machine. The results of the computer's analysis and interpretation of the data that had been given it, were then outlined. 59 10 08

1960

1960 08 16
A Cambridge bio-physicist could provide the answer to cancer and leukaemia if he had the use of a modern computer to work out millions of observations. John Kendrew is working in a prefabricated building and with a first-class computer costing about £1,000,000 could tackle problems beyond contemplation, says Professor Fred Hoyle, the Cambridge space expert, in an article in the 'New Scientist'. He goes on to attack a Government decision to spend £60,000,000 on space research which would be repeating American and Russian projects. They should put the money into sciences that are held up by lack of funds 60 08 16

1962 03 27
A Cambridge scientist is building a new electronic computer between 10 and 100 times faster than any existing machine, capable of over 500 million basic decisions per second. Neil Wiseman, chief engineer at the University mathematical laboratory, is putting all this brain power into a six-inch cube. It may take two years to complete. The existing ESDAC II computer occupies space equivalent to a large living room and has so many valves it needs air conditioning to cool it. 62 03 27

1963 06 28
More computers and automatic machines should be installed in City Council departments instead of extra highly paid officers, said Ald. P.J. Warren. Some firm which deals with computers should examine the structure of the City Treasurer's Department to see how it would be susceptible to treatment by modern machines. But computers could cost as much as £200,000 (about £3.5M today) and the problems that arose were new ones only an officer could solve. 63 06 28

1963 07 05
Electronic computers are being used by W. & C. French to speed the building of New Hall at Huntingdon Road. The severe weather delayed progress for three months but with their aid it is hoped they will still finish within the deadline. It is the first time computers have been used in this region to devise a logical schedule of jobs to be carried out & grading them according to importance. The college dining hall is taking shape with its elegant dome using ferro-concrete previously used in boat building. A huge crane is playing a major part to gain lost time 63 07 05f

1963 08 08
Cambridge firms may be able to hire the use of 'Titan', the University's new computer which is being installed at the Mathematical Laboratory in Corn Exchange Street. Their present computer has done work for 36 departments, even Archaeology have put it to use. The University was one of the pioneers and was using a computer as far back as 1949. There is one in the Engineering Department and two small ones were used by the Examinations Syndicate for processing marks. At present there are 500 computers being used in the country by the coal, car and gas industries, businessmen were told 63 08 08

1963 10 28
Perse School make digital computer – 63 10 28

1965 09 24
Cambridge University may become one of work's leading centres in use of computers to index texts – Linguistic Computing Service produces word indexesorjo – 65 09 24a

1966 04 01
CCAT offer courses in computers and mathematics for school-leavers – 66 04 01d

1969 01 15
Mathematical Laboratories in Corn Exchange Street to be demolished; how to move Titan computer; EDSAC 1 started in 1949, EDSAC 2 in 1958 – 69 01 15

1969 03 27
Titan computer lowered into place after being transferred from old mathematics laboratory into New Museums Site – photo – 69 03 27

1969 11 06
Pye establish new computer centre opposite St Andrew's Road HQ – 69 11 06

1970

1970 02 04
Ministry of Technology Computer Aided Design Centre, Madingley Road operating nine months; staff outnumber the firms who have found anything useful to design by computer – 70 02 04

1970 02 16
Cambridge Computer Services ltd take delivery £200,000 computer, 10-unit ICL 1903a delivered through window at Juniper House – 70 02 16

1971 01 01
Coulson's builders celebrate 50 years by installing a computer – 71 01 01

1971 02 26
CCAT new computer will be used by hundreds of schoolchildren as part of their normal syllabus – 71 02 26a opens – 71 03 11a

1971 02 26
University to buy new £1.7m computer – IBM 370/165 to take over from Titan – 71 02 26c

1971 04 16
Pye Group to set up new computer bureau, Cambridge Data Processing – 71 04 16

1971 07 07
Cambridge Computer Services to be centre of major new computer services group – 71 07 07a

1972 03 08
Addenbrooke's Hospital computer blood tests

1972 07 21
Mid-Anglia police were very happy with their new Volvo patrol cars - until they found that using their VHF radio cut the car's speed by about 15 miles an hour. Drivers doing 50 m.p.h. found that when they made a radio call their speed dropped to 35 m.p.h. – alarming for them and for anyone travelling behind. The Volvos bought on the insistence of the Chief Constable in the face of opposition by some members of the police authority came into service earlier this year. They have a special computerised fuel injection system, and when drivers made radio calls the VHF signal sent the computer haywire.

The result was that the engine was starved of petrol supply and the car quickly slowed down. But the mystery fault has been cured - by a mechanic from Sweden and a roll of baking foil.

1972 08 01
Two Cambridge University computers half a mile apart have been operationally linked by an infra-red beam - the first system of its kind to be set up in Europe. The computers involved are the massive new £1.7million machine just installed in the mathematics laboratory, and the smaller, older, instrument in the Department of Engineering. The link is established by a beam transmitter and receiver at the top of each building and an essential condition of operation is that no obstruction lies in the path of the beam.

1972 11 07
Addenbrooke's Hospital computers, p9

1972 12 27
An electronic design team lead by a Wendens Ambo man have produced a miniature power supply unit which could revolutionise whole fields of electrical equipment. Now with this single vital piece of equipment greatly reduced in size, the desk top computer becomes a reality. What Malcolm Murchall and his team of four engineers at Advance Industrial Electronics have done is cut down the size of the normal power supply unit to one-eighth of its present size. Already a number of large orders have been received with Japan, Australia and Canada all showing a strong interest in the new device

1973 01 30
To most people Value Added Tax means a slightly worrying period round about April 1st of this year when the prices of familiar objects are likely to do funny things. But to the staff of the new V.A.T. wing of the Customs and Excise Department it means a massive piece of reorganisation to be undertaken in a remarkably short period of time. Although 6,00o extra people have been employed nationally the Cambridge sub-office does not have a particularly large staff. When fully up to establishment it will employ about 26 people involved in the administration of VAT and this number will include officers and secretarial staff. From dealing with 500 people over Purchase Tax the officers of the department will now have contact with 10,000. But against this the tax is easier to administer in some areas and has been designed for computer control from the outset

1973 10 01
A close-circuit funeral for an "old friend" will be televised at Cambridge University. A special eulogy will be delivered and he will be dismembered for research studies and sent to the scrap heap. The "body" will be the much-loved 10-year old Titan computer. It has been on light duties since the end of its 18-month phasing out link with his more powerful replacement £1.7million worth of I.B.M. 370/165. The 370’s memory is being doubled in size & the main disc memory for holding all the files is now 1,000 million characters

1974 06 08
A computer device which will enable police to produce statistics in four hours instead of the present four weeks, is to be installed at Police Headquarters, Hinchingbrooke. It is a data entry system which will replace the present manual system used for drawing up quarterly and annual statistics. The information will then be run through the County Council computer at Shire Hall. Cambridgeshire Police do have another computer carrying criminal records and names on police files. This machine will eventually be linked with the national police computer terminal at Hendon. It has come in for criticism nationally because of “big brother” fears

1974 09 19
Police cars throughout Cambridgeshire have been fitted with a controversial American speed trap. Known as VASCAR (visual average speed computer and recorder) it enables a police offer on patrol to measure the speed of a vehicle whether he is in front or behind the target, waiting in a side-road or

even travelling in the opposite direction. Before bringing the instrument into operation use the police will be demonstrating the machine to the press and public

1976 07 17
At Cambridge Museum of Technology there is no indication that the old Cheddar's Lane sewage station off Newmarket Road, is now a museum. The place looks a shambles surrounded as it is by knee-high weeds and forbidding "Keep Out" signs. Go there; don't be put off by the haphazard arrangement of exhibits and ask the helpful attendants when you fail to understand. A computer in a museum? An electron microscope – both are on display in this potentially breath-taking exhibition. I can't help but suspect that when the lease runs out the museum is going to be transformed into a profitable block of riverside flats. But I hope this does not happen.

1977 07 08
Teddy Boys, ban-the-bomb and the Suez crisis are now all part of the history syllabus. Pupils at Netherhall School have been entering into the spirit of the 1950s by coming in wearing home-made "Ted" jackets and bootlace ties, with their hair slicked back – part of a competition for the best period costume. Parents have contributed 1950's "bygones" including ration books, a wedding dresses, pieces of pioneering Titan computers and valve amplifiers. The lads have borrowed school table knives to substitute for the dangerous 16th November flick-knives of the 50's.

1977 12 02
Sir – some months ago Cambridge central library introduced a new computer system. The computer broke down and 250 borrowers were notified that books which they had already returned were overdue. The Electronic machine is our century's God and to suggest that a human being with ballpoint pen would be more efficient than a computer is, to those idol-worshippers, plain blasphemy. Since the Browne system was abandoned folly reigns in the pixilated Library – Mrs M. Daniels.

1979 02 16
Police computer, p10

1979 07 07
Cambridge is a scientific and industrial gold mine where the brains and talents of those in the university can be harnessed and developed by industry so that new products can be made and new jobs created, said Margaret Thatcher. At Laser-Scan she saw techniques developed to digitise maps using laser beams and computers. She was delighted to be told that one system they used was called 'Maggie' for short. "So it should be if it's a scientific system", she said. But when told it was a dump file she quipped "Oh no, you can't do that to me – you'd better find another name for it"

1979 08 17
Many of Cambridge's traffic problems may soon be solved by silicon chip technology. The chips would operate micro computers geared to all the city's traffic lights to ensure smooth traffic flows at all times. Such an elaborate computer system would originally have cost around £5 million but now County Council officials consider the new technology could reduce the cost to as low as £100,000. It could be connected with all the car parks giving motorists instant information through street corner signs and also tie in with temporary one-way workings and pedestrian crossings.

1980

1980 01 29
The ZX80 personal computer was launched by Sinclair research of Cambridge. It can be used in the office, the factory and the home. The creator, Mr Clive Sinclair, says any child of 10 with normal arithmetical ability could use it. The new machine is smaller than anything of comparable performance and also four times as cheap. In kit form it costs £77.95 and a completely-built version will be available in March at £99.95. It can be plugged into an ordinary television set or standard

computers. The ‘software’ can be operated through a standard tape cassette and it comes with a 130-page, step-by-step manual. 80 01 29

1980 06 30
Frank Stoakley has retired from Heffers Bookshop which he joined in 1920. He is a walking encyclopaedia when it comes to sorting out problems and even after the firm installed a computer the staff still needed his expert knowledge. He spent 37 years managing the scientific books department and since 1965 has been sorting out the trickier requests for unusual or hard-to-come-by books 80 06 30a

1980 07 08
Sinclair Research, the company founded by Mr Clive Sinclair who pioneered the world’s first pocket calculators and micro-televisions wants to buy the church of St Andrew the Great and turn it into a laboratory. They are currently researching computers and electrically-powered vehicles and are looking for premises in central Cambridge. But the church say he is unlikely to get permission because schemes for offices, shops, a language school and a mosque had already been rejected. 80 07 08g

1980 02 04
The age of the microchip has taken all of us by surprise but now sons and daughters crave for the latest computer game, digital watch or radio-controlled car. Since Tandy came to Cambridge five years ago they have found rapidly-increasing demand in the home electronics field and have now divided their Emmanuel Street operation into two shops. One will house a veritable treasure trove of hi-fis, tv games and intercoms appealing to the young. 80 12 04b

1980 12 10
Anyone who can afford it can now ‘pick the brains’ of a central computer via Prestel, a specially adapted tv set connected to the telephone. A remote control keypad enables it to dial up the local computer and access material stored in its memory which travels down the ordinary telephone line. In the future one might use on-screen displays to teach children, transmit newspaper-type material with a domestic print-out facility, exchange letters and conversations by text displays and vote in general and local elections. 80 12 10a

1981 01 26
Microelectronics have caused some major shake-ups in the way we live and work; Cambridge’s electronics wizard, Clive Sinclair brought us the first pocket calculator and pocket television and now launches Britain’s first complete personal computer, the ZX-80. It plugs into the aerial socket of your television and is tuned in like a video-game. But then you have to type in a program from the 128-page instruction manual. The computer is not really all that bright and must be given a clear list of instructions before it can do even the simplest sums. 81 01 26a & b

1981 01 28
A Cambridge student has set up a computer dating service for lonely hearts in the university. For just 50p the unattached undergraduate is promised an introduction to the partner of his dreams. Confidential questionnaires drawn up by a student of experimental psychology were sent out and the results loaded on a computer. It matches them up to produce ideal partners and bliss ensures. It is hoped the first couples will be paired off by St Valentine’s Day. 81 01 28

1981 04 01
Pye Business Communications is marketing a revolutionary office intercom system, the M100S, which, literally, speaks for itself. A voice unit will verbally tell a caller if a particular extension is in a meeting or on holiday. It can also take a video screen which will flash up information such as a user transferring to another extension or an absence or holiday list. All the information is put into a microcomputer exchange by the keys or dials of the intercom and telephones. 81 04 01a

1981 04 10
The hopes of many Cambridge scientists rest on a successful launch of the US space shuttle. One of the planned missions will be to put into orbit a space telescope which will be used along with Spacelab which the shuttle will be taking into orbit on its first operational mission. It will only be in orbit for a week but may lead to a permanent space station. University astronomers are using Starlink, a computer network which links the Cambridge institute with five other astronomy centres in Britain to process vast amounts of astronomical images. 81 04 10

1981 09 17
Netherhall School is to take a leap into the computer age with a £35,000 development programme. Their involvement in micro-processors began long before the current upsurge of interest shown by schools in computers. Two years ago staff began working out how they would like to see computer studies develop in the school. An extra teacher will be provided at Government expense and a programmer employed. They expect the delivery of 15 micro-computers soon. 81 09 17a

1981 10 09
Netherhall School has won a £35,000 computer development grant for its pioneering use of new technology in education. The funding is coming from the Department of Industry, Cambridge colleges and Acorn Computers who will supply 16 of their new BBC Microcomputers. They will now develop computer programmes to teach science, geography, economics and history in schools around the country. 81 10 09b

1981 10 23
The video boom is taking over lecture halls and laboratories in Cambridge University as more and more students are being taught with the help of home-made films. Medical students watch in close-up how to cut up a body, vets are shown outside broadcasts of animal behaviour and trainee priests film sermons to learn about preaching techniques. Thousands of other students have learned how to use a computer as a result of a training film made by the University Audio-Visual Aids unit. 81 10 23

1981 11 26
The early electronic portable games were big, bright, brash boxes for children that made silly noises. Now they include the internationally best-selling Electronic Master Mind. Many of the TV games use cassettes providing some striking and original computer graphics as well as taxing adversary games. The silicon chip will bring about a still greater revolution. One expert says that in the future children will be communicating around the world through computer games. 81 11 26c

1981 12 02
Cambridge Computer Store was established by Claude Cowan in the spring of 1978 at the very start of the microcomputer boom. The first computer they offered was a Tandy TRS-80 which proved popular and is still going strong. Computers now span the full gamut of power, size and cost – all the way from about £70 to £5,000 - and the customers have widened dramatically covering everybody from schoolchildren studying computer science to experienced professionals in industry or the laboratory. 81 12 02

1981 12 21
The television is at the centre of a major boom in consumer electronics, with everything from home computers to video recorders, video discs, Teletext and Prestel information services, games and, probably within the next few years, programmes beamed from satellites. But many TV addicts are prepared to watch a picture of bad quality. Now Labgear which has factories at Abbey Walk and Ely have produced plug-in amplifiers to increase the strength of television signals. 81 12 21

1982 01 29
Clive Sinclair, managing director of Sinclair Research Ltd of Cambridge has been chosen as Personality of the Year in a new series of awards for achievements in technical innovation. It follows the success of his ZX 81 personal computer of which some 40,000 are now being sold every month in

this country. Production of the model, which has been a major force in bringing computers into everyday use, is now greater than any other computer in the world. 82 01 29

1982 02 25
Cambridge newsagent Bob Truelove has an easier working day now his newspaper delivery boys and girls have been computerised. Once he had to get up with the lark to start marking up the morning newspapers for his delivery team. Now the computer delivers a daily print-out for each of the rounds showing which papers have to be delivered to each house. It is the same story in the evening when the News arrives. The Cifer computer, which was installed by Bob Dear of Glisson Road, has been specially programmed so no technical skills are needed to operate it. 82 02 25

1982 04 02
'Uncle Clive' Sinclair is close to becoming part of the legend of the microchip. He brought to the word innovative calculators, digital watches and pocket-sized televisions. Then in 1976 he formed Sinclair Research to conceive new projects in the consumer electronics field, including an electric car. He started with a little computer then produced a ZX81 version priced at just under £70. Now he has moved into the flat-screen television tube and mini-tv set. 82 04 02c

1982 04 02
Acorn computers has hardly had time to catch its breath since it won an agreement with the BBC to supply microcomputers suitable for use alongside a television series. But the broadcasts to schools began with only 200 of the 500 schools which wanted to take part having received their computers and programmes for the general public were postponed. Now 6,000 have been despatched with an order for 15,000 from Western Australia. 82 04 02d

1982 04 24
Cambridge electronics wizard Clive Sinclair shook the computer world by announcing a new powerful machine at a fraction of the price of its rivals. The Sinclair ZX Spectrum costs £125 with a 16k memory, capable of high-resolution colour graphics. A mini floppy disc-drive memory device will shortly be available at the staggeringly low price of £50. 82 04 24

1982 10 02
Electronics wizard Clive Sinclair unveiled his new Cambridge headquarters. The building is based on a soft-drinks works with a futuristic new wing added. Sunlight coming through the glass roof of the new wing and water from a spring under the original building will be used to control air temperatures. Telephone and security systems will be heavily computerised. The reception area includes the largest polished bronze sculpture in the work by Elaine Blumenfeld who lives in Grantchester. 82 10 02

1982 11 16
Unicorn, Cherry Hinton reopened after redecoration, p10
Torch computers research and development centre, Abberley House, Gt Shelford, p16

1982 11 30
Cambridge innovator Clive Sinclair is using well water to help heat his new headquarters building in Willis Road. Instead of cold tap water, the boiler uses water from a deep borehole which has already been pre-warmed, free of charge, with the heat from the centre of the earth. It is the first installation of its type in the country. Looking after the system is a Sinclair ZX81 computer. 82 11 30

1982 12 09
Accommodation for computer-based companies in Cambridge is at a premium. Several firms are run from private houses with others based around King's Parade and Jesus Lane, where buildings are available and rents favourable. Now a technology square is planned for land at the rear of Shire Hall similar to Trinity College's Science Park but at smaller rents. There might be dual-purpose buildings for start-up companies providing both a home and an office to work in. 82 12 09

1983 01 19
A former baby wear factory tucked out of sight behind the Great Northern Hotel is to be the home of an ambitious new project to help women break into the new technology jobs market. The Cambridge Women's Resources Centre will start computer courses taught by women with crèche and child-care facilities. Eventually they want to offer lessons n carpentry, trade unions and the law. 83 01 19

1983 01 25
The 'Cambridge News' has pioneered a number of new technologies in the newspaper industry. A few years ago its composing rooms looked like a factory, dealing with molten lead, burning gas and tons of heavy metal. Now it resembles a carpeted office with two products of the modern age, lasers and computers, at the heart of the process. More technology could be employed but with several editions to produce every day there is no time to stop to introduce it. 83 01 25b

1983 02 12
Plans to move the Cambridge War Memorial from the Hills Road – Station Road junction have been scrapped. Instead of making way for a new system of computer-controlled traffic lights, the memorial will remain as an island. Originally the County Council wanted to relocate it to a small shady spot under the trees in the Botanic Garden, but the City refused to co-operate. 83 02 12a

1983 02 16
Cambridge is rapidly becoming one of the country's leading computer centres. The latest to enter the fray is Herald Computers of East Road. They are convinced there is a gap in the market for tailor-made systems designed to help small businesses choose the right computer and programmes for their particular purposes and so their activities will be outside the range of the man-in-the-street. 83 02 16

1983 03 24
Clive Sinclair went to London in January to learn he was worth £129 million on the Stock Exchange. Now the head of Sinclair Research told a Guardian 'Young Businessman of the Year' award that he has created 2,000 new jobs. The firm was founded in 1979 and launched the world's first under £100 personal computer in 1980, followed by improved models including the colour ZX Spectrum. 83 03 24 p20

1983 08 31
The Cambridge computer industry has suffered its first casualty. Grundy Business Systems, based on the Science Park, launched its NewBrain microcomputer in May last year, based on a design by Sir Clive Sinclair. It became one of the best-selling in the UK but an unexpected decline in sales and a failure to meet deadlines led to cash difficulties. 83 08 31 p1

1984 07 02
Children at Hoker's Pre-Preparatory School in Comberton are being given an early introduction to the computer age. They are being taught the whole range of computer skills from the age of four to help them deal with the demands of the next century. Ann Hoker, the principal says "Small children are not inhibited on a computer – they are going to be the first adults of the 21st century and computers will be to them what ballpoints are to us". 84 07 02

1984 07 06
Computerised control of traffic in Cambridge by means of traffic lights has been in operation along two major routes since March. Chaos has not ensued and the county council's traffic management scheme claims it has knocked several minutes off journey times in peak periods. 'Scoot' operates in Hills Road and Queen's Road by marshalling traffic into 'platoons' of vehicles and then pilots them through as many sets of lights as possible. 84 07 06

1984 07 25
Cambridge's office space is going fast. Mount Pleasant House on Castle Hill is now fully let as is the former Heffers printing works in Hills Road whose Betjeman House is used by two computer

software firms, Acornsoft and Logica. Citibank has taken the first floor of Hunting Gate's Carlyle House while Standard Life's development on the corner of Glisson Road was let prior to the completion of the building. 84 07 25

1984 08 01
Acorn Computers has been presented with the Queen's Award for Technological Achievement for the innovating design of the BBC Microcomputer system. It was presented to Chris Curry, joint managing director at their offices in Fulbourn Road. He praised the company's research team who have produced a computer of such elegance of design that three years after its introduction it still knocks spots off the competition. The ceremony comes three weeks after Acorn won a four-year renewal of its important BBC contract. 84 08 01 p3

1984 11 24
Home computers put hi-tech game sales under fire – 84 11 24a

1984 12 06
Youngsters at Earith school will have a computer at their fingertips, thanks to a 280-year-old will drafted to help education in the village, The money left by Thomas Skeeles brought writing slates in the 1700's but will now supply computer and monitor equipment that will be a big boost for the 175-pupil school. 84 12 06

1985 01 10
Experts at Voice Input, a small company at St Ives have become one of the world leaders in voice control computer programming. It can direct a computer to turn the TV on and off, dial telephone numbers, print letters, speak foreign languages or just open and close the curtains. The firm hope to have a table-top micro-processor with inbuilt microphone and voice recognition equipment ready by April and forecast a mini office revolution with a semi-automatic typewriter which will type a letter as it is spoken. 85 01 10d

1985 01 21
Skilled technicians, computer programmers and systems analysts are now at a premium in Cambridge and are being bought and sold like footballers between firms who pay transfer fees to get the staff they want. The Itec centre in Hooper Street is making a small dent in the problem by taking youngsters with no formal qualifications and training them on technical subjects. Of 28 taken on so far, all but one have got good jobs. 85 01 21a

1985 03 01
Sir Clive Sinclair is taking a £3 million high-tech centre as part of a major expansion of his Cambridge-based research company. The present headquarters at Willis Road is bursting at the seams so he is moving to the Camtec Centre off Rustat Road. Other high-tech companies in the area include Cambridge Electronic Industries, Acornsoft and Logica. Sinclair this week launched a big advertising campaign for its £100 pocket TV and hopes to sell 200,000 units of their QL computers in . 85 03 01a

1985 06 18
Cambridge Medical Answer Service to install computer link for elderly - 85 06 18 & a

1985 10 05
The new Amstrad PCW 8256 is a complete word processing package of no less than 256K for £399 plus VAT. The Cambridge Computer Store sold eight inside two hours. It is a system designed to be attractive to anyone who uses a typewriter with a full-size keyboard, green monitor, built-in disc driver and printer. It comes with a Locomotive word processing software kit which is said to be self-explanatory and particularly easy to use. "Start using the machine and then, if you're stuck, refer to the handbook", they advise the user 85 10 05

1986 01 28

Tansley Typewriter Company, which has been selling and servicing typewriters for over 60 years, has made a successful transition into the world of computers. Their showroom in Longstanton High Street features the Olivetti MP24 SP personal computer with a 20 megabyte hard drive. The company has a team of four engineers who travel as far as Peterborough and Bedford to carry out installations and also service electronic typewriters and word processors 86 01 28a

1986 03 05
Fire Brigade control centre computerised - 86 03 05

1986 07 07
Torch Computers of Gt Shelford has developed a revolutionary Triple X computer using the Unix-based computing system with a revolutionary 'Opentop' facility that allows more than one page to be seen at a time. Around the edges of the screen are a number of symbols called 'icons'. Using a control known as a 'mouse' the user can direct a floating arrow and by clicking the 'mouse' twice the accounts package comes up on the screen. By then double-clicking the calculator icon it appears on top of the accounts. This is known as 'multi-tasking'. It means that for the first time one doesn't need programming knowledge to take advantage of the Unix system's benefits 86 07 07a

1986 09 11
Cambridgeshire schools will have no help or guidance in the field of computer studies, even though it is the fastest growing subject on their timetables. 86 09 11a

1986 11 17
At Logica's smart Cambridge offices a strange clipped voice rises above the human chatter. By the end of the decade it may well become commonplace. For the firm is devising a computer which can talk to train travellers on the telephone. They are also working on a computer which will help Shell devise formulae for lubricating oils. The company, which has 2,400 staff working in 3 countries, opened its Cambridge offices two years ago but has difficulty recruiting staff because of a national shortage of trained workers. 86 11 17

1986 12 12
Milton Road Infants is one of eight Cambridgeshire schools linked through a modem to an electronic mail system, the 'Times Network System'. Using word processors the children begin a story which is then finished by children at the Beeches School in Peterborough where 70 per cent of the pupils are Pakistani. They are also hoping to link up with Newcastle and America or a kibbutz in Israel. If teachers use the links imaginatively the pioneering new project will prove its worth. 86 12 12 & a

1987 02 16
The 'Cambridge News' has entered the computer age. Now reporters' typewriters have been replaced by computer screens and their stories are transmitted electronically to the sub-editors who check for mistakes, write headlines and determine what type-size it should be printed. This is done on screen before being sent electronically to be photo-set. When each page is finished it is made into a metal plate using lasers and is ready for printing. If all goes smoothly a story can take just half an hour to go through the entire system 87 02 16a & b

1987 05 07
Three years ago Harston Mill was a stinking derelict building that had been abandoned by its animal feed-producing owners with an assortment of odd sheds which had been used for storage. Now it has been transformed into the home for one of the new electronic generation of companies, Cambridge Interactive Systems. The old building has been restored with a modern office block clad in mirrored glass and an artificial pool where the real river once ran. Now computer chips perform their electronic miracles in air-conditioned silence in the same place where cogs once slowly turned as they ground the corn. 87 05 07

1987 10 27

An overhead cable car system between St Ives and Cambridge has been suggested by the Willingham-based Alternative Transport Society as an alternative option to a rail link. There would be a lack of noise and fumes and cables would be high enough over level crossings, eliminating congestion. It would have simple platforms for alighting with cars slowed automatically by computer control and the total all-weather system would ensure safe and reliable transport. But opponents describe it as a non-starter and just pie in the sky. 87 10 27b

1987 12 29
Procyon Research began at Cavendish when research students produced an interface for the BBC Computer; compiles programmes for industry – 87 12 29a

1988 02 26
Cambridge University Department of Geography was founded 100 years ago and trained surveyors for the colonial service. The first Professor, Frank Debenham was a member of Shackleton's artic expeditions, Prof Alfred Steers studied the British coastline while Prof Sir Clifford Darby analysed data in the Domesday survey. Today it concerns itself with satellite information, computerised data for mapping, the study of the environment and a host of other modern problems. 88 02 26

1988 05 17
Netherhall & Bar Hill schools use computers for local history projects 88 05 17 & a

1988 09 10
Computers are the key weapon in the 'News' battle against deadlines. Previously crucial minutes were lost while journalists' stories were re-set into type by other staff. Now writing and typesetting can be done by one person. The process begins at 7.30 am each day. The newsdesk – run by the news editor, the assistant news editor, the chief reporter and an editorial assistant – decide on the best stories and brief the 15 reporters based in Newmarket Road and another eight in district officers. Stories flood in from every source imaginable and more than 100 press releases and letters are received each day 88 09 10 & a

1988 10 20
Three Cambridge computer pioneers hope to revolutionise communications with a fibre-optic cable-TV service carrying eight or nine TV channels, some collected by satellite dishes. Eventually there would be 50 channels, an independent phone service, teleconferencing, a security alarm system, home shopping and remote banking. Cambridge Cable might link with Cambridge University's Project Granta to provide a data transmission service network from Girton to Addenbrooke's Hospital 88 10 20

1988 10 28
Cambridge AppleCentre was officially opened by Schnorbitz the dog and his well-known owner, comedian Bernie Winters in the presence of Directors from Apple Computers UK. It provides hardware and software on site at Clifton Court with a resident training consultant offering courses on the Apple Macintosh as well as a service department. The Apple is especially suitable for the busy executive with its friendly graphic interface and is suitable for updating company literature or starting a newsletter. They can be rented for special occasions such as exhibitions with a rental/conversion scheme for those who wish to evaluate it before buying. 88 10 28a

1988 12 01
St Mary's school Headmistress Sister Christina is quick to dispel thoughts of the former convent as a cocooned world for over-privileged young ladies: all 575 have the opportunity of using the computers from the age of 11. "It is not just needlework and good manners, we have never gone in for embroidery. I am very keen the girls should go into a man's world as people, not as feminists", she says. The school has a strong background in science and engineering and many go on to polytechnics to study electrical, mechanical and chemical engineering 88 12 01

1988 12 07
Next Technology developing device to make moving pictures and photographs as easily accessible on computers as words and graphics 88 12 07a

1989 04 12
Acorn, the computer company which helped found the Cambridge Phenomenon, has bounded back into profitability after a worrying loss in 1987. They started getting into difficulties with the collapse of the home computer market in late 1984 and, apart from a recovery in 1986, have shown a loss ever since. But now the company, which employs around 230 people, is on course for expansion in its new role as a high-volume low-cost manufacturer of computers and work stations. 89 04 12

1989 04 04
A high-tech computer system set to revolutionise Cambridgeshire's 15 main libraries has gone on line. Chief librarian Brendan Dwyer checked out the first book on the 'Cambook' system at Arbury Court. It will provide instant information about books on loan and a faster reservation system. "Pioneering the latest technology will help us to continue to offer a faster efficient service throughout the 1990s", he said 89 04 04a

1989 05 25
Next Technology have launched Voyager, a super-computer which stores some 270 compact discs carrying micro-pictures of pages of books. It works like a jukebox and can 'play' more than one disc at a time. It is similar to the Domesday Project which allowed schoolchildren to retrieve information from a massive disk. If whole libraries were put on it then researchers could look-up and cross-reference items in seconds. Machines cost from £13-£21,000 and worldwide interest has been shown. 89 05 25b

1989 06 23
A new bridge over Hobson's Conduit is part of a scheme to beat traffic jams at the junction of Lensfield and Trumpington Roads. Vehicles would turn along a short stretch of Brookside then cross the stream towards Trumpington. The rest of the junction would be controlled by a complex system of traffic lights based on the successful new computer system on Huntingdon Road. Some of the cost would be met by whichever company develops the ground-level car park in Saxon Street, county engineers say. But it was rejected as 'devastating and environmentally disastrous' by city officials. 89 06 23 & b

1989 07 19
Cambridge Library is to close for two weeks as part of a computerisation programme to streamline efficiency. It will replace the system installed in 1976. But the Cambridgeshire Collection will be open as normal 89 07 10a

1989 08 23
Central Library to close for two weeks as part of computerisation programme; plans to rebuild the entrance poston3ed as would result in unsatisfactory entrance to a major public building 89 08 23

1989 09 07
Cambridge Central Library is closed while details of every book in stock are fed into an ambitious new computer programme. When complete staff will be able to pinpoint exactly who has borrowed which book and when it is due back. That was the information that was recorded on handwritten ledgers when it opened in 1855. Open access, allowing readers to select their own books by browsing the shelves was introduced in 1922. Now on an ordinary weekday 2,500 people call at the library in Lion Yard 89 09 07

1989 09 08
Cambridge scientists are part of an international team involved in a 10-year project to map the human genome. The double helical structure of the DNA was discovered by Crick & Watson. Its genetic

language was identified by Dr Sydney Brenner, now heading the University Molecular Genetics Unit and Dr Fred Sanger invented ways to read the message. Dr Aaron Klug is working out how the DNA is packaged. They will have to invent technology as yet unknown, create a new scientific language and build super computers. The end produce will be used by medical geneticists in Cambridge and elsewhere 89 09 08a

1989 10 25
Cambridge is considered by many to be the computer capital of East Anglia. Now Evesham Micros has opened a new computer store in Glisson Road offering a wide range of micro-computer hardware, software and advice. They have computers from Amstrad, Olivetti, Epson and Atari with the latest IBM system arriving soon. Epson and Star printers together with modems from Mirrorcom, Amstrad and Pace are also stocked. Hard disks are put in operating condition so everything is ready by the time it gets to customers 89 10 25b & c

1989 12 21
Cambridge's new £200,000 car space scheme with signs around the city linked to the county council's traffic computer which monitors the five main car parks, hit teething troubles leaving shoppers driving round trying to find a parking space. 89 12 21

1990 01 24
The Ronald Rolph Court consists of 23 workshop units has helped several new companies make a positive start over the last seven years. Firms represent all aspects of industry in Cambridge from established concerns specialising in traditional trades to high-tech firms developing electronics and computers. They include J.S. Wilson, whose bookbinding business was established in 1830 and Ditton Binders which supplies company ring binders and menu covers 90 01 24c

1990 02 15
East Anglia's hospital service is to be linked by sophisticated computer systems able to keep track of patients wherever they go. While Addenbrooke's Hospital is developing is own patient information system the Ipswich Hospital has unveiled their answer to lost medical records and mix-ups over appointments. It should mean an end to form filling, chasing paperwork and hours on the phone. Computer links between wards and departments will instantly transmit patients' records, requests for tests or treatments, find empty beds and lay on ambulance transport 90 02 15a

1990 03 02
Physicist Prof Stephen Hawking, a victim of the wasting motor neurone disease, has been given a new computerised speech synthesiser to help him communicate. The American-developed Digital DECTalk device allows him to use a screen to select words and phrases which are then translated into speech. 90 03 02b

1990 03 05
Desperate families in Mid Anglia are plunging deeply into debt. Citizens Advice Bureau staff have been flooded with pleas for help but are having to turn some people away. They are begging local councils to give money to allow computers to be bought to lift the load. Until now many clients have been jobless people, single parents or council tenants. But an increasing number are married, working people with mortgages. Many have no cash to buy essential items such as food and clothing. – 90 03 05

1990 03 06
Cambridgeshire Police's budget has been slashed by the Government which has approved less than a third of the money needed. Schemes to buy communications equipment and computers will have to be deferred and police cars leased to save money. A kitchen extension at police headquarters will also be cancelled. The Home Office says the system of allocating money has changed and if Cambridgeshire is aggrieved they will look into it – 90 03 06

1990 06 30
Sir Clive Sinclair's Cambridge Computer firm is moving to Scotland; meteoric rise and fall; started Sinclair Radionics in 1962, moving to Cambridge in 1967; produced digital watch and calculator, tv and computers. Won Queen's Award in 1975 and knighted 1983. But C5 flopped, marriage broke up and sold his house on Madingley Road in 1989 – 90 06 30a

1990 07 25
Computer history in Cambridge; memories of Prof Maurice Wilkes who ran the first-ever programme 1949 – feature – 90 07 25a, b

1990 11 28
Acorn Computers backed by Apple Corporation to form Advanced Risc Machines – 90 11 28b